


City of Greenbelt, Maryland

Memorandum

To: City Council
From: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager 
Date: August 27, 2015
Re: Pepco Proposed Tree Removal and Pruning Work

Pepco, the electric utility serving the City, has proposed tree removal and pruning work as part of its Vegetation Management Program. Council received an initial briefing on this proposed work on July 22, 2015. Attached is a copy of the minutes of that meeting.

One of the items requested at the work session was for Pepco to provide one map showing all the proposed work. That has not been done and an explanation is attached as an email. However, as noted in the email, Pepco's proposed work is related to seven (7) feeder lines which serve Greenbelt and Pepco has provided a plan for each feeder line showing the proposed work.

It is worth noting that the work on five (5) of the seven (7) feeder lines is limited. The largest portion of the work is proposed on two plans, 15741 and 15742, which cover the area between Kenilworth Avenue and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway. Whereas the previous work session focused on these two (2) plans, 15741 and 15742, it is recommended this work session focus on the other five (5) plans which propose a limited amount of work. Copies of the five (5) plans are attached. It is staff's opinion that these plans can be approved which will enable Pepco to partially meet its objective. Review would continue on the other two plans.

1. Plan 15738 proposes work on city property between Greenwood Village and Greenbelt Road and at Lakecrest Drive. Seven (7) trees by Greenwood Village are proposed for removal and one (1) at Lakecrest Drive. Permission is recommended. The Greenwood Village area will be an area for additional reforestation.
2. Plan 15739 proposes only trimming/pruning work along Hanover Parkway between Greenbelt Road and Hanover Drive, on Greenway Center Drive, on Hanover Drive and on Greenbelt Road between Holy Cross Church and Greenway Center. Permission is recommended.
3. Plan 15740 proposes to remove seven (7) trees at the corner of Southway and the ramp from the Baltimore-Washington Parkway and two trees where the Sunrise Property meets The Hanover apartments. Permission is recommended.
4. Plan 15744 proposes removal of thirteen (13) trees along Edmonston Road. Twelve (12) of these are Bradford Pears. This area should be reforested. Pruning/trimming work is also proposed. Permission is recommended.

5. Plan 34021/28 proposes work in the Pepco easement which runs adjacent to Doctor's Hospital and Windsor Green. Permission is recommended.

Since the July meeting, staff has worked with GHI, Charlestowne Village, Boxwood, Lakeside, Windsor Green and the Advisory Committee on Trees (ACT). Some neighborhoods are supportive of the proposed removal of trees while others are not. Related communications are attached. GHI is currently reviewing the recommendations of its Woodlands Committee. ACT has reviewed about half of the proposed work and has identified five (5) additional trees to be taken off the proposed removal list. ACT should finish its review in the next 2-3 weeks. Additionally there are areas which staff wants to review again before making a final recommendation and there is a need for additional consideration on how to respond to the proposal for tree removal in the Belle Point forest preserve. As a result, it is recommended that no decision be made on Plans 15741 and 15742 so that additional staff work can be done.

Summary

It is recommended Council allow work to proceed on Pepco Plans 15738, 15739, 15740, 15744 and 34021/28 while withholding permission on plans 15741 and 15742 to allow for additional review and consideration.

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cc: Jim Sterling, Acting Director of Public Works
Richard Fink, Superintendent of Parks and Grounds
Brian Townsend, Horticulturist
Celia Craze, Director of Planning & Community Development
David Moran, Assistant City Manager
Cindy Murray, City Clerk